

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10  
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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6946  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MADRID  
AMCONSUL OPORTO  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
USMISSION USNATO  
USNMR SHAPE  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 LISBON 6666

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEC

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ELAB PO  
SUBJECT: SOCIALIST UNIONS MOVE TO CONFEDERATE

SUMMARY:  
THE PREDOMINATELY SOCIALIST OPEN LETTER MOVEMENT (CARTA ABERTA)  
WILL SOON BE DISBANDED AND REPLACED BY A NEW DEMOCRATIC LABOR  
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ORGANIZATION, THE DEMOCRATIC UNION OF PORTUGUESE WORKERS  
(UDTP). THE MOVE HAS PRECIPITATED UNUSUALLY STRONG COMMUNIST  
REACTION AND HAS HEIGHTENED DIVISIONS WITHIN THE SOCIALIST  
LABOR HIERARCHY. THE CDT OF PELAGIO MADUREIRA HAS ALSO  
CONDEMNED THE MOVE AS HAVE PSD LABOR LEADERS WHO SEE IT AS  
A SOCIALIST PLOY TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE DEMOCRATIC LABOR  
SECTOR. REACTION SEEMS OUT OF PROPORTION WITH EXPECTATIONS

FOR THE NEW ORGANIZATION, BUT THE ACTION ITSELF MAY SIGNAL AN END TO SOCIALIST AMBIVALENCE VIS-A-VIS THE FORMATION OF A DEMOCRATIC PARALLEL TO THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS (CGTP). END SUMMARY.

1. CARTA ABERTA LEADERS WILL MEET IN COIMBRA SEPTEMBER 9-10 TO OFFICIALLY DISBAND THE ORGANIZATION AND TO PAVE THE WAY FOR A NEW NATIONAL LABOR CENTRAL, THE DEMOCRATIC UNION OF PORTUGUESE WORKERS. CARTA ABERTA SPOKESMAN, VICTOR HUGO SEQUEIRA, OF THE LISBON OFFICE WORKERS UNION WHO HAS SPEARHEADED THE DRIVE TO FORM A DEMOCRATIC PARALLEL ORGANIZATION TO THE CGTP, HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE UDTP, ONCE ESTABLISHED, WILL BE NON-PARTY ORIENTED AND OPEN TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS AS WELL AS DIRECT AFFILIATIONS BY ESTABLISHED UNIONS. IN A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS, SEQUEIRA, ONE OF THE MOST DYNAMIC AND EFFECTIVE SOCIALIST UNION LEADERS, DECLARED THAT THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF THE UDTP IS TO OFFER A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE TO PORTUGUESE WORKERS AND TO GIVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE REPRESENTED BY A LEGITIMATE TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION WHICH IS NEITHER FINANCED NOR CONTROLLED BY A POLITICAL PARTY OR A FOREIGN POWER. HE SAID THE UDTP INTENDS TO CONFRONT THE CGTP AT EVERY TURN BY FOSTERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF VERTICALLY STRUCTURED NATIONAL TRADE UNIONS IN TEN INDUSTRIES AND PARALLEL UNIONS AT DISTRICT AND LOCAL LEVELS. BY OPENING THE UDTP TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, THE SOCIALISTS HOPE TO CUT INTO COMMUNIST STRENGTH IN AREAS WHERE FINDING A NUCLEUS

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FOR FORMING PARALLEL UNIONS WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE.

2. COMMUNISTS REACT.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MOVE HAS INFURIATED THE COMMUNISTS. ON SEPTEMBER 6, THE CGTP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ISSUED A VOLUMINOUS PRESS RELEASE CONDEMNING THE ACTION AS ANOTHER CAPITALIST-INSPIRED ATTEMPT BY DIVISIONISTS AND REFORMISTS TO CONFUSE THE WORKERS AND TO DESTROY LABOR UNITY. THE CGTP COMMUNIQUE ASSERTED THAT THE PROJECTED FORMATION OF UDTP IS A SOCIALIST MANEUVER TO FORCE CHANGES IN THE BASIC LABOR LAW DESIGNED TO "PULVERIZE" ORGANIZED LABOR AND TO STRIP FROM THE WORKERS THE "FRUITS OF THE REVOLUTION." FOR SEVERAL DAYS NOW THE COMMUNIST PRESS HAS DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE SPACE TO ATTACKS ON THE SOCIALIST CARTA ABERTA LEADERS, CAPPED BY A PARTICULARLY STRONG LEAD EDITORIAL IN "O DIARIO". SEVERAL ARTICLES HAVE SINGLED OUT FORMER LABOR MINISTER MALDONADO GONELHA AS THE PRINCIPAL CULPRIT.

3. OTHER REACTIONS.

THE NON-COMMUNIST PARTY FAR LEFT HAS BEEN EVEN MORE VICIFEROUS IN THEIR CONDEMNATION OF CARTA ABERTA AND THE SOCIALISTS. THE UDP ISSUED A STRONG DENUNCIATION AND BASE-FUT, THE RADICAL

CHRISTIAN LABOR ORGANIZATION, AN AFFILIATE OF THE BRUSSELS-

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BASED WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR, HAS CALLED FOR WORKER  
SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF THE "CAPITALIST THREAT". IRONICALLY,  
THE RECENTLY ORGANIZED CONFEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WORKERS  
(CDT), A CREATION OF PELAGIO MADUREIRA, LABOR ADVISOR TO  
MARIO SOARES IN THE FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT, HAS  
JOINED THE CHORUS ALBEIT WITH A DIFFERENT TACK. THE CDT  
SEES THE DEVELOPMENT AS A SOCIALIST TACTIC AIMED AT GIVING  
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THE PS CONTROL OF ANTI-COMMUNIST LABOR FORCES. THIS WAS ALSO THE THRUST OF A SOMEWHAT Milder CRITICISM BY PSD UNION LEADERS.

#### 4. CDT ORIGINS

WHEN MADUREIRA GAVE BIRTH TO THE CDT LAST FEBRUARY, HE WAS STILL IN THE EMPLOY OF SOARES, ALTHOUGH EFFECTIVELY STRIPPED OF ANY POWER, AND THE PS WAS QUICK TO DENOUNCE HIM AND TO DISASSOCIATE ITSELF FROM THE CDT. MADUREIRA HAD FALLEN VICTIM TO A POWER PLAY BY PS INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY RUI MATEUS, WHO SUBSEQUENTLY ASSUMED HIS POSITION AS LABOR ADVISOR TO SOARES. UNTIL THEN, MADUREIRA HAD BEEN A KING PIN IN SOCIALIST LABOR. AS DIRECTOR OF THE LABOR STUDIES CENTER (CES), HE WAS CHIEFLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIALIST LABOR ACTIVITY AND WAS THE FOCAL POINT FOR CHANNELING INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONS FROM THE ICFTU, INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS, VARIOUS NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTERS IN NORTHERN EUROPE, AND THE GERMAN FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG. MADUREIRA WAS A STAUNCH ADVOCATE OF CREATING A NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION CENTER. HE RAN AFOUL OF FORMER LABOR MINISTER MARCELO CURTO AND OTHER DOCTRINAIRE SOCIALIST LABOR LEADERS WHO AT THE TIME WERE INSISTING THAT SOCIALIST UNIONS REMAIN IN THE CGTP AND FIGHT THE COMMUNISTS FROM WITHIN. WHILE THIS CONFRONTATION WEAKENED HIS POSITION, HIS ACTUAL DOWNFALL CAME AT THE HANDS OF GONEHLHA AND MATEUS WHO, WHILE SHARING HIS VIEWS ABOUT THE FOUNDATION OF A DEMOCRATIC PARALLEL ORGANIZATION, WERE ALSO CONVINCED ALONG WITH A MAJORITY OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LABOR LEADERS THAT MADUREIRA WAS INEFFECTIVE AND SHOULD BE REMOVED. WITH THE FORMATION OF THE PS'S JOSE FONTANA FOUNDATION IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, AND THE EARLIER WITHDRAWAL OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MADUREIRA AND THE CES BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MADUREIRA WAS EFFECTIVELY ISOLATED AND SUBSEQUENTLY REMOVED FROM THE SOARES TEAM. EMBITTERED, MADUREIRA MOVED ON HIS

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OWN TO FORM THE CDT (SEE LISBON 1350).

#### 5. HARD TIMES FOR THE CDT

WITH WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE CES TREASURY AND WITH LIMITED SUPPORT FROM SOME INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIATS, PRINCIPALLY THE INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION AND WOOD WORKERS, MADUREIRA SET UP A STAFF OF SEVEN ORGANIZERS WHO FOR THE MOST PART WORKED WITH BLUE COLLAR UNIONS IN THE NORTH. THE CDT ACTUALLY MANAGED TO WIN ELECTIONS IN THE 5000 MEMBER CONSTRUCTION WORKERS UNION OF AVEIRO, IN SMALL CONSTRUCTION WORKERS UNIONS IN BRAGANCA AND VISEU, AND IN A METALLURGICAL UNION IN BRAGANCA. THE CDT ALSO SET UP NATIONAL UNIONS OF CHEMICAL AND HOTEL WORKERS. IT BEGAN PUBLICATION OF A BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

AND FORMED A CONSUMER COOPERATIVE FOR HOTEL WORKERS (HOTCOOP).  
AFTER THESE INITIAL SUCCESSES, HOWEVER, THE CDT SUFFERED A  
SERIES OF REVERSALS. THE NEWLY ELECTED LEADERS OF THE  
BRAGANCA METALWORKERS, INTIMIDATED BY MILITANT COMMUNIST  
OPPOSITION, REFUSED TO TAKE OFFICE. NEW ELECTIONS WERE HELD  
AND THE COMMUNISTS WON. HOTCOOP WAS TAKEN OVER BY THE COMMUNISTS  
AND DESPITE AN INITIALLY SUCCESSFUL EFFORT BY CDT FORCES TO  
SEIZE AND HOLD THE FACILITY, HOTCOOP IS NOW IN COMMUNIST  
HANDS. THE CDT NEWSPAPER IS NOW PUBLISHED INFREQUENTLY AND  
THE NATIONAL CHEMICAL UNION NEVER REALLY GOT OFF THE GROUND.  
MADUREIRA HIMSELF HAS ADMITTED THAT THE CDT BARELY HAS FUNDS  
TO LAST OUT THE YEAR. HE ATTRIBUTED HIS FAILURE TO SOCIALIST  
OPPOSITION AND TO THE REFUSAL OF PSD UNIONS TO AFFILIATE TO  
THE CDT WHICH HE HAD COUNTED ON.

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AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA  
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6. CDT AS CATALYST

DESPITE ITS FAILURE TO TAKE ROOT, ITS FORMATION WAS CATALYTIC. THE UDTP IS LARGELY A PRODUCT OF MADUREIRA'S GAMBIT AND THE PSD LABOR LEADERSHIP IS PLANNING A NATIONAL CONCLAVE OF PSD UNIONS IN LATE NOVEMBER WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE CREATION OF YET ANOTHER DEMOCRATIC CONFEDERATION ALA CDT. OF FAR LESS SIGNIFICANCE HAVE BEEN THE RECENT INAUGURATIONS  
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OF A CDS (CENTER DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL PARTY) NATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION, THE PORTUGUESE LABOR MOVEMENT (MPT) AND ON THE FAR LEFT, THE GENERAL UNION OF DEMOCRATIC WORKERS (SDGT) OF THE PCP M/L.

7. PSD WILL WAIT AND SEE

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CREATION OF UDTP HAS ALSO BEEN CRITICIZED BY PSD LABOR LEADERS WHO SEE IT AS A PS PLOY TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE DEMOCRATIC LABOR SECTOR. MOST OF THESE LEADERS ARE IN THE PSD "MODERATES" CAMP AND HAVE LONG ADVOCATED COLLABORATION WITH THE SOCIALISTS ON THE UNION FRONT, EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF BEING WILLING TO JOIN THEM IN A NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL. THE LATTER POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE CONDITIONED ON SOCIALIST WILLINGNESS TO EITHER PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH AN ORGANIZATION ALONG NON-PARTY LINES OR TO AT LEAST AGREE TO AN EQUAL DIVISION OF POWERS. THIS WOULD BE A SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSION BY THE PSD LEADERS AS THEY CONTROL MOST OF THE 40 SOME ODD UNIONS WHICH ARE STILL IN DEMOCRATIC HANDS. THEY ALSO REALIZE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOCIALISTS HAVE GREATER APPEAL AMONG WORKERS IN THE BLUE COLLAR SECTOR WHICH THE PSD HAS BEEN UNABLE TO PENETRATE. REGARDING THE UDTP, OUR PSD CONTACTS SAY THEY WILL WAIT TO SEE IF THE SOCIALISTS ARE SINCERE ABOUT NOT MOVING IT ALONG PARTY LINES. THEY HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS THAT THIS WILL OCCUR, HOWEVER, SAYING THAT INTERNAL SOCIALIST DIVISIONS MILITATE AGAINST IT. IN THE MEANTIME, THEY ARE PROCEEDING WITH PLANS TO HOLD A NATIONAL CONCLAVE OF PSD UNIONS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 25 WHICH COULD RESULT IN THE FORMATION OF YET ANOTHER NATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

8. A HOUSE DIVIDED

THE MOVE TO CONFEDERATE HAS HIGH-LIGHTED THE DIVISIONS IN THE  
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SOCIALIST LABOR HIERARCHY. FORMER LABOR MINISTER GONELHA, CLEARLY THE DOMINANT PS LABOR PERSONALITY, IS AN OUTSPOKEN ADVOCATE OF DEMOCRATIC LABOR UNITY. THE DECISION TO MOVE AHEAD ON THE UDTP COULD NOT HAVE BEEN TAKEN WITHOUT HIS APPROVAL AND SUPPORT. HOWEVER, THE QUIXOTIC AND DOCTRINAIRE MARCELO CURTO, WHO WAS REPLACED BY GONELHA AT THE LABOR MINISTRY, OPPOSED THE DECISION. WHILE HE LOST HIS MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO, CURTO'S INFLUENCE IN THE PS HAS REMAINED SUBSTANTIAL PARTICULARLY IN THE LEFT WING OF PS LABOR. HE IS A NATIONAL DEPUTY, SHARES IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE JOSE FONTANA FOUNDATION, AND IS EDITOR OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR MAGAZINE, SINDICALISMO. AFTER THE DECISION WAS TAKEN TO DISBAND CARTA ABERTA AND FORM UDTP, CURTO USED THE PUBLICATION TO EDITORIALY ATTACK THE DECISION. AS A RESULT, PUBLICATION OF THE MAGAZINE HAS BEEN WITHHELD UNTIL THE PS NATIONAL COMMITTEE MAKES A DETERMINATION. THE COMMITTEE WILL LIKELY RULE AGAINST CURTO AS IT DID WHEN HE SCUTTLED THE SOUTHERN BANKWORKERS UNION ELECTIONS (SEE LISBON 1984), BUT IT IS NOT CONSIDERED LIKELY THAT HE WILL SUCCEED IN SCUTTLING THE UDTP.

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9. COMMENT:

THE ACT OF CREATING A NEW NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN  
ITSELF WILL BE MEANINGLESS IF THE PSD UNIONS ARE  
EXCLUDED OR IF CONTINGENCY PLANS ALLOWING FOR THEIR  
EVENTUAL AFFILIATION ARE NOT CLEARLY DELINEATED AT THE  
OUTSET. CARTA ABERTA IS PRACTICALLY NON-OPERATIVE. THE  
CDS LABOR ORGANIZATION HAS VERY LIMITED STRENGTH IN A FEW  
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WHITE COLLAR UNIONS IN THE NORTH. THE CDT, WITH MADUREIRA  
STILL CLAIMING IT SHOULD HAVE A ROLE IN THE FORGING OF A  
UNIFIED MOVEMENT, HAS ALL BUT DIED ABORNING. IF THE CURTOS  
OF THE PS SHOULD HAVE THEIR WAY AND ALIGNMENT WITH THE PSD  
UNIONS IS DENIED, THE UDTP COULD WELL WIND UP AS JUST ANOTHER  
SET OF INITIALS. THIS SHOULD NOT OBSCURE THE FACT, HOWEVER,  
THAT THE SOCIALISTS MOVE TO CONFEDERATE MAY WELL SIGNAL AN  
END TO SOCIALIST AMBIVALENCE VIS-A-VIS THE FORMATION OF A  
DEMOCRATIC PARALLEL TO THE CGTP. FOUR YEARS LATE PERHAPS,  
BUT NONETHELESS A PROMISING DEVELOPMENT.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 08 sep 1978  
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**To:** STATE  
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